

Bikeway News

Houston Bikeway Program

Mobility

Have you noticed that walking and cycling in downtown Houston has become easier? Chief Harold L. Hurtt kicked off a downtown mobility initiative on June 1, 2005.

Downtown

The initiative began with an education phase to remind motorists, cyclists and pedestrians to follow the rules of the road, common road courtesies that may be forgotten. These reminders have a goal in mind: to make downtown more people friendly and improve mobility for everyone.

Drivers now wait for pedestrians to walk across the crosswalk before turning at the corner, and cyclists avoid riding their bikes on the sidewalk. Everyone seems to obey the traffic rules more these days.

To ensure compliance with the abiding of traffic rules, the Houston Police Department issues warnings or citations when someone forgets to follow the rules or breaks the law. Whether it's a fast moving vehicle that weaves between lanes (bikes and buses included) or a jaywalker crossing in the middle of the block, a watchful police officer is there to

"Mobility"... Continued on page 4.

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Mayor Bill White (right) speaks with fellow rider Joel Alba, team captain of the UH bike team, as he prepares to lead the bike to work ride to City Hall. Mayor Pro Tem, Carol Alvarado (center) makes final adjustments to her helmet before the ride.

Bike to Work -Houston 2005

With more riders than ever before, and more registered riders, Houston cyclists traveled to work across the city from the Bay Area to Champion Forest and the Energy Corridor. New riders and regular commuters joined the Bike to Work Day celebration to help promote bicycling awareness. Many motorists shared their support by cheering riders to work and yielding the right of way when appropriate. The

enthusiasm garnered support for the next event and many asked about organizing more frequent bike to work days.

"Bike to Work"... Continued on page 3.

In this issue:

Mobility Initiative	1
Bike to Work	1
Volunteers Teach Safety	2
Committee Chair Term	2
Operating A Bike Lid	3
Bike Lids	3
New HPBAC Chair	4

Bikeway News, Summer 2005

Volunteers Teach Bike Safety

When Oak Forest Elementary School parents wanted to do a bike safety event for their students, volunteers jumped at the chance to help.

Members of the Houston Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee, many of them certified instructors by the League of American Bicyclists, joined with other volunteers and parents to offer hands on activities, everyone benefited. Volunteers fulfilled their mission to teach bike safety in Houston and students gained bike safety knowledge and practice.

The volunteers manned eight learning stations. They offered information and activities to teach the rules of the road, how to use hand signals, instructions on changing a flat tire, demonstrations on helmet fitting, and a bike rodeo to put it all together. Everyone had a good time and shared a commitment to bicycle safety.

To learn how you can become a certified instructor, visit the League of American Bicyclists at: www.bikeleague.org.

If you want to participate in bicycle and pedestrian issues that affect Houstonians, consider attending a meeting of the Houston Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee. The Committee meets at 6:30p.m., on the third Tuesday of each month, at City Hall. For more information contact (713) 837-0003. A committee Web site is under construction at: www.bikehouston.org/HPBAC.



Jackie Friedman, three-year chair of the Houston Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (HPBAC), wraps it up and returns to her other passion: volunteer activities focused on safety.

Committee Chair Completes Term

Jackie Friedman has served as chair of the Houston Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (HPBAC) for the last three years. During her term she has enhanced communications between the committee and the City of Houston, while reaching out to other organizations as well. She returns to dedicating her free time to volunteer programs at M. D. Anderson.

A long term cyclist, Jackie brought personal commitment to the committee sharing her experiences as a bike commuter and seeking ways to improve safety and access, particularly in the Texas Medical Center area.

"I grew up in the Third Ward. Where our synagogue stood is now part of the Texas Southern University campus. I remember clearly the train that is now the Columbia Tap trail," she said. "I attended Sutton Elementary.

I now live in the Montrose area.

My commute to work is only about

4 miles each way. I started biking

because the Medical Center is terrible

for parking. When I realized that it

took longer to drive to remote parking

and take the shuttle bus than to bike,

the choice was obvious. That was about

seven years ago.

Taking an Effective Cycling class gave me the confidence to bike on the street. I now enjoy many of the advantages afforded to cyclists. I get some exercise, I park for free right outside the door, I get a discount on my car insurance for not driving to work every day, and I've met some of the coolest people in Houston. The disadvantages are unsafe conditions (especially on the RR tracks), being yelled at by motorists to get off the road, biking home in the summer heat, and of course, helmet hair.

Someone asked me what my passion was. I have to admit that it's safety. I serve on the Radiation Safety Committee at the UT Health Science Center, and was on the Risk Awareness Committee when it existed. I'm also on the TMC Bike Safety Committee."

Thank you Jackie, and best of luck in your new volunteer activities.

HPBAC

The Houston Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory
Committee meets the third Tuesday of the month to address bicycle and pedestrian issues in Houston. The meetings are held at City Hall, 1st floor, small conference room.
Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m.

Operating A Bike Lid Is Simple



Lift the shell using the front handle.



Roll your bicycle into the unit.



Close the shell over the bike and your accessories.



Lock the bicycle and accessories with your own U-lock or padlock.

The bike lid holds two bicycles so you can share it with a friend. There is an interior bike rack for two under the shell.

"Bike To Work"...Continued from page 1.

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"Bike To Work"... Continued on page 4.

Bike Lids

Want to take your bike shopping but wonder about parking and storing your shoppping bags and packages? Want to ride to work but don't want to leave your twowheeled pride and joy out in the elements all day? Perhaps a bike lid can help.

Forty bike lids have been donated to the City of Houston by Starlite Media. The bike lids are offered for public and employee parking through the City's bike parking program. The bike lids are easy to use. They provide a two-bike rack in the interior and a shell to secure the bike from the elements while you continue your shopping or head for a full day of work.

The shell is lightweight. You can lift the shell and roll your bike inside. You then place your bike onto the inside bike rack. The rack allows room for two bicycles in case you are traveling with a friend. They can park with you.

Bike lids will be offered at Houston public libraries, city parks facilities and at other public parking areas. For a list of locations, visit our Web site and click Bicycle Parking at: www.houstonbikeways.org



New Chair for HPBAC

We recently had the opportunity to interview David Dick, the new chair of the Houston Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee. Here's what he told us:

David, we understand you're a Houston native?

"I have lived in Houston all of my life except for the years that I was going to college at University of Texas at Austin."

What got you interested in cycling and how did you become an educator?

"As soon as I got my first bike as a kid, I was riding all around town. The bike gave me a sense of freedom and I really enjoyed being able to go wherever I wanted without having to get someone to take me. If my mother knew some of the places I was riding to, she might have taken my bike away. When I got to Austin, I even wanted to ride more. From my apartment in town, I could ride in any direction and be out in the country in no time. I really enjoyed riding in the hills. A couple of times, at the end of the school year, I rode my bike from Austin to Houston just for fun. When I rode into the driveway at home, my mother didn't believe that I had really ridden until I told her that she had to take me to the bus station the next day so I could go get my car and my clothes.

I have been a member of the Houston Bicycle Club since about 1988 and have been the Chair or Co-Chair of the Easter Hill Country Tour in Kerrville in 1995, 1999 and 2003. As a member of BikeHouston, I have also helped with the Moonlight Bicycle Ramble for many years. In addition I enjoy leading in-town rides in Houston, such as the East Side Breakfast Rides, the Around the Loop Ride and the Red Dot Ride.

I have always been very comfortable riding on the road in town but I know



David Dick is new HPBAC chair.

that many people are intimidated by that. One of the reasons that I enjoy teaching BikeEd* classes is that I can show other riders how they can ride safe and smart, increasing their confidence on the bike and their enjoyment of riding."

What transformation have you seen in Houston as a cycling community and what more would you like to see?

"I have been asked by some people why I spend so much energy working for cyclist issues in the Houston area. They don't perceive Houston as being a very bicycle-friendly city. If you look back and see where we were 10 or 15 years ago and compare that to what we have now, you can see that we have accomplished a lot. We still have a lot of work to do, but as long as we keep making progress, all of our work is worth the effort."

What are some of the things you'd like to see the HPBAC work on in your tenure?

"I would like to have more participation from the various agencies that effect the cycling environment in Houston. The more dialogue that we have between groups, the more we can come to understand the how everyone thinks. If we can't talk with the various decision-makers, we will accomplish nothing. If we can speak face to face with them, at least we all can articulate our concerns."

* David is a certified instructor under the League of American Bicyclists: www.bikeleague.org. "Bike To Work"... Continued from page 3.

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BikeHouston
The Third Ward Law Firm

VIPs

Mayor Bill White Mayor Pro Tem Carol Alvarado

Visit our Web site for more on Bike to Work Day at: www.houstonbikeways.org.

"Mobility"... Continued from page 1.

remind everyone about the rules, and issue a ticket when necessary.

As a result, everyone is more alert and courteous making for a more friendly and safe downtown environment. Have you noticed?

City of Houston Bikeway Program

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Bikeway News, Summer 2005